



Expert Summit

MASTERCLASS TRANSCRIPT



Namecheap Expert Summit

Branding on a budget | Glenda Hoon-Russell

So how do you know that this video is for you? This video is for you if you want to learn some quick actionable steps on how to create a brand on a budget.

If you're in the first year or two of business, or if you're a freelancer, solopreneur, small business owner you are in the right space. Because today I'm going to teach you how to put together a brand guidelines that consists of a logo, a font palette and a color palette.

Especially as solopreneurs, we generally start our businesses with little to no capital. But the thing is, is we still need an identity. And what I mean by an identity, it's the clothing that your business wears when it goes out into the world. So it's your logo, your color palette, your font palette the visual aspects that people see, and basically the outer shell of your business. These are most likely the first impression of your business.

We put a lot of emphasis on making a first impression as a person like going to a network meeting. You want to look professional, blah, blah, blah. But first impressions do matter. And they especially matter with your business because in this day and age, people are looking at your business more online more than they're looking and meeting you in person. So your best foot forward needs to be in the identity of your business.

But one of the things that I saw throughout all my years of being in this industry is that so many entrepreneurs and solopreneurs will spend so much time and resources on creating this identity when honestly they didn't need to. I'll go into that in here in just a second.

I'm going to be teaching you today how to put together a brand guidelines consisting of your logo, your color palette, and your font palette in a very affordable way.

My name is Glenda Hoon-Russell, and for eight years I owned a graphic and website design firm, and I've been in this industry for over a decade.

When I first started out, I was a freelance graphic designer. After being laid off twice, I decided, it's time for me to open up my own business. And honestly, I

just needed to put food on the table. But after a year, I was able to go from a freelance graphic designer to having a full remote international team. And I was serving small to medium-sized business owners and solopreneurs and everything in between on how to create their identity and also with website strategy. So I love sharing my knowledge. That's in an easy way to understand and also that's accessible to all income levels.

So what did I learn after eight years of owning a graphics and website design firm? Well, I started to see these patterns. In the first year to a business, a business owner doesn't need to go spend hundreds if not thousands of dollars on a marketing or a branding or creative agency to create their identity for them. Because here's the thing is in our first couple of years of business we're still trying to figure out who we are. What are the services that we're offering? What are the products that we're offering? Who are we selling these to?

Because if you're anything like me, you started this business because you had this draw that you knew you wanted to be an entrepreneur. You knew that you wanted to get away from maybe your corporate world or corporate setting. And you just didn't feel like you fit into that anymore that you had more to offer on your own and that's great, but it does take time to figure out what it is, who your audience is. And by what it is I meant what it is that you're selling. What are the services or products?

My approach is to take a lighter, less expensive approach to creating your identity that gives you the ability to get your feet wet and get to know who your business is, who you are as a business owner in that first year or two and then go hire that big marketing firm, so they can look at your ideal client and target exactly who you are selling to.

So let's get started. So what's the number one lesson that I would teach every single one of my clients no matter what their budget was anything? Consistency breeds trust, and trust breeds sales. I'm going to say that one more time. Consistency breeds trust, and trust breeds sales.

Let's break that down a little bit. One of the things that I see or I guess the mistakes that I see a lot of businesses do right now is they'll come up with an identity. And then within three months, six months, they get bored and they want to change up their logo, change up their name, change up everything, the website and what they're doing is they're being inconsistent to their client. Or they might have a color palette that they use, but they think, well, I'm going to

start adding these other colors in because I'm kind of bored with my current color palette. So what they're doing is presenting themselves in an inconsistent matter. And what I want to emphasize today is that consistency breeds trust. And we want to breed that trust so people want to buy from you.

It's kind of like having, you may have that one teenager in your life. They're a little bit, hormones are going crazy. And one day they're up and they're excited and they want to be around you, and then the next day, they're just not in the mood and they're angry and pissed off at the world, and then the next day they're up and down. And so that inconsistency when you approach them, you're like, well, I don't know what I'm going to get today. That's totally normal for teenagers. However, we don't need to do that with our identity.

So what we want to do is present a more consistent mood to our audience so they can recognize us. 'Cause we've all heard of that rule, The Rule of Seven that we must show our brand or show something at least seven times for someone to remember it. Same thing, we need to show our brand consistently way more than seven times, if I'm being perfectly honest so people can begin to recognize who we are, trust that we are a legitimate, honest business and then they'll buy from us. So whenever you're going through this and whenever you are thinking of, Oh I want to add this kind of element to my brand. And remember that consistency breeds trust, and trust breeds sales. Most important lesson.

So how do you do this? You create a brand guidelines and that's what I'm going to be teaching you how to do today.

So as you see here there is a simple brand guidelines that just consists of your logo, your primary logo, your color palette and your font palette. That is pretty much all you need. That is the bare bones of a brand guidelines.

Yes, brand guidelines can get a lot more complex. I used to create books of brand guidelines for my clients and they had all different kinds of things. And from secondary color palettes to design elements, to photography styles. And those are things that you might want to think about in the future, but we're keeping it simple for the sake of this masterclass.

And if you use these three elements, the logo, the color palettes, the font palettes you can create a very consistent and beautiful identity for your company.

Okay, let's look at the logo. For logos, I have basically one golden rule and that's to keep it simple. Legibility over beautiful, over pretty. So be sure that your logo is legible, that whatever the name of your business is that somebody can read, keep it simple.

And the reason is is that you and I are in a market space that we are constantly competing with whether it's other online businesses or the distractions of the world, or that someone is looking on their phones, scrolling through TikTok and they have five seconds to look at your video, look at your brand, look at your Instagram account, you are constantly competing.

According to the National Center of Biotechnology Information, the average person has the attention span of eight seconds, eight seconds. And this study was done in 2013. So I guarantee you that it's probably even less now.

So we have such a small window for people to recognize us and to show up on their feeds and to show up in front of them that use that time, that couple of seconds to its best ability. That's the only reason why I will constantly say keep things simple and legible. You're going to hear me say that over and over throughout the rest of the video.

All right, so let's look at the do's and don'ts of a logo. First of all, you want to avoid any kind of overlapping of an image. This or icon or text or anything like that. It looks messy, especially when you get to a smaller scale looking at a logo on a smaller scale. And if for some reason, your logo is pixelated as in it's a lower resolution file, it could even look more screwed up because it is pixelated. So avoid any kind of overlapping.

Avoid the overuse of colors. So using multiple, multiple, multiple colors and avoid using metallics. I know so many people love metallics and yes they can look really beautiful. However, when you print them out sometimes they just don't look the same, and they can look really muddy and metallics just don't print very well. So I would avoid metallics altogether in your logo. But if you want, you can use them in your photography or your graphic elements if you really feel like you need to have metallics.

Avoid any kind of illegible fonts, these are calligraphy type fonts and script fonts. And not all of them are bad, don't get me wrong. But I see a lot of people they want to have that really sexy calligraphy type, swirls. And that is great. However, think of legibility before you think of beauty. It's something that you want to make sure that your audience can read what your logo is

before they think of beauty. I'm not going to tell you to avoid script fonts altogether but be very selective if you are going to choose a script font.

And here's a test that I use that I use with almost every single logo. Even to this day, the logos that I make for my own companies I definitely make sure that they pass this test. Shrink down your logo to the size of a dime and the size of a quarter, and look at how is it clear that someone can read it very easily?

And the reason is, is that most of what people see about our brands in our online presence is on their phones. And you want to make sure that it works and it speaks well even on our phones, and our phones shrink everything down to just a minuscule. So make sure that it passes the quarter and the dime test. And if it doesn't, I would reconsider which fonts you use.

And then some of the do's, well, that was a do but some of the other do's is make sure that you stick with one to two colors and three at the most. Don't add a lot of colors to your logos. Again, don't make it complex, keep it with one to two colors or three at the most.

If you decide to use an icon, be sure to keep it really simple. So for example, let's say that you are a sports medicine doctor and you want to put a baseball and a football and a tennis ball and a golf ball and a golf club into your logo. And you don't need all of that. All you need to do is put sports medicine doctor which will be the next tip that I say, but you don't need to make your logo complex. You just need to... You can save those for graphic elements on your website or on your brochures, but you don't necessarily have to crowd your logo with all kinds of icons. It just makes it confusing, and it doesn't pass the quarter dime rule if I'm being truly honest.

And finally, put the term of what you do into your logo. So one of the things that I saw with new businesses or one to two year old businesses is that they had these names like Sage and Citrus. And it was like, well, what does that mean? Well, okay, we'll put wedding photographer underneath or put a consultant in coach or a same thing, but you know put what you are in, or maybe it's a pet photographer or maybe it's a freelance writer, put what you do into your logo. Because this way you're not only branding the name of your business, but you're letting people know this is what I do. This is how you can buy from me. And so that's letting people know these are the services or the products that you serve.

Making sure that you put what you do into your logo is such a great thing to do, because it lets people know what you do and the name of your business. So you're branding two items at the same time.

Where do you create your logo? So, because this is branding on a budget I use my favorite website called [canva.com](https://www.canva.com). I know that you've heard of it but I am a huge advocate of it. I didn't have the Canva when I was a graphics designer. It is such a great tool that I use today over all of the fancy, creative suite of softwares that I used to use when I was in the industry. And honestly, Canva has all the bells and whistles and it has really great bells and whistles in their free account.

So you can use a template or use their services on how to create a logo through [canva.com](https://www.canva.com). Using their free version or if you have a little bit of budget you can also upgrade your account.

If you do have a little bit of a budget I would recommend going to [creativemarket.com](https://www.creativemarket.com) or Etsy and buying pre-made logos. And this is especially on Etsy, I love utilizing Etsy. You'll find tonnes of graphics designers that have made pre-made logos that they will customize it, like put in the name of your business in there and then give you the logo files, and you're done. So this is a really great way that if you have a 10, 20, \$100 budget, whatever that might be, it doesn't matter that you can use these templates and buy them. And then the graphics designer will send you either a downloadable digital file depends on what you buy, or they'll send you the actual logo files if they do the customizing themselves. So lots of options there for lots of different income levels.

So what are the questions that you ask yourself before you finalize your logo? Make sure that it passes the dime and quarter size test. Shrink it down. Is it legible? And then also, did you put your name of your service or product into your logo? Super important.

All right, let's move into color. Color is incredibly important and I love it because first of all, I love color, but I love the psychology behind it. So one of the first things that I recommend is looking at color psychology. And you can very easily do this by just Googling or going on Pinterest and looking at color psychology.

So why is color psychology important? Well, 90% of snap buying judgements are based off color alone. Let's look at an example. So the color red it's

supposed to be energizing and show passion. That's why we see it a lot around Valentine's day in love, and it's supposed to be an urgency, so that's why you see stop signs and ambulances with red on it.

But for buying decisions, let's look at this company. I know we all know this one, they are draped in red. Their logo is pure red. Everything that they have within that store is basically red when it comes to the branding of the company. So is it any coincidence that we can walk in there and we go in there for a loaf of bread or a pair of socks, and we come out \$200 later. I think not. I think they know exactly what they're doing when they branded themselves in red.

So color has a very profound effect on our buying choices. So one of the first things that I want you to do is think about what emotions do you want your brand to portray? And you can either start Googling color psychology or use my little cheat sheet provided in the workbook.

But what are the emotions that you want to portray? Maybe it's loyalty and trust, maybe it's peace and calm, maybe it's confidence and passion, whatever those are, just find out what emotions you want your buyer to experience when they look at your brand, and choose colors accordingly.

So once you know kind of your basic colors like blue or yellow or brown or grey, then use some of these websites that I have listed below to actually find your color palettes. I used to use these websites all the time. And what's so wonderful right now is I've noticed that so many of these websites now offer the hex colors, which is basically the color code that translates on our computers of what the color will look like. So you will need to keep these codes, so you are consistent with your colors moving forward. And this is something that you can place in your brand guidelines.

And when you're choosing colors, choose no more than four to five colors, you don't need any more than that. Make sure that they're contrasting colors, that they're different from each other. So what I wouldn't do is choose if you're going to choose five total colors, choose four blue colors. Make it different so you can use different combinations. And one of the tests that I use when I'm choosing a color palette is I do the rule of two, every single color needs to go in a pair. So if every color works together in a pair then that means you have the optimal amount of color combinations moving forward in this year that you're going to use this brand guidelines. So you can use those two colors. You can

use these two colors and these two colors and these two colors, and they will all look consistent with your brand and they will all look beautiful. So colors can be really fun. This is probably my favorite part of the brand process.

All right, let's look at fonts and your font palette. Fonts can be overwhelming. I mean, let's be completely honest. So I'm trying to make this as simple and easy as possible but the one thing that you want to do let's look at this simple brand guidelines again.

And the formula that you're going to find is you'll need a headline font, a subheader and a body text. So you're going to need three different fonts. And actually you've technically only really need two which is the header and the body texts. But for a little bit of variety since you are going to be using these fonts for an entire year, I recommend choosing three fonts.

So the biggest thing with fonts is legibility. You want to make sure that however you're presenting your information, that people are able to read it quickly and easily. So you're not putting more pressure on them and more work on them. Because again, you're competing with all these other websites or all these other blogs or all these other... Yeah, I mean, you're competing with them. And so you want to make sure that your ideas your content, your services, your products, et cetera is easy to understand and easy to read. So legibility.

Also, when you are choosing a font palette you want to make sure that your fonts are different enough from each other. So this means choosing like a bold Sans-serif font an italic font, and then just a Sans-serif font. You get the idea of just using a combination that each of those fonts are distinctly different from each other but one doesn't stand out more than other. So you don't want your subheading font to stand out more than your headline. Does that make sense?

You want your headline font to be the first thing that you read, subheading to be kind of an accent to the headline and then your body text honestly needs to be easy to read.

Check out these different font combinations that I have provided for you. These are some of my favorite font combinations that are either free fonts or they are pretty inexpensive. So you can steal them, take them use them all, whatever you want. But these are some of my favorite combinations. And you can also look for font combinations by Googling or going through Pinterest and just searching for font combinations, font pairing, Sans-serif, font combinations

minimal font combinations. Playing with those different keywords to find that right pair.

So once you have your logo, your color palette and your font palette, you can put it on a PDF and that will be your holy grail moving forward. And that is the logo and the font palette and the color palette that you use moving forward. And if at another point you want to add some design elements or a photography style, go ahead and add those in there. But for the sake of this short workshop, I had to just keep it nice and simple.

What I would recommend is on, especially on Canva you can create through their Brand Kit the logos you use, the font palettes. And then if you upgrade one of their upgraded levels you can also add your logo in there. So you create this brand kit that you can refer to really easy to use and your colors are always there. So there's no chance of deviating away from your identity.

Creating a identity for your company doesn't have to be this long drawn out process and it doesn't have to be expensive. It can be something that utilizing the free tools that we have available to us online, and also some tidbits and knowledge that I've shared with you today, you can create a brand on a budget.

Thank you so much for joining me today. My name is Glenda Hoon-Russell. I am a professional speaker and coach and I speak on a variety of topics like marketing and branding and self care and healing. Thank you so much for being here and yeah have a great day. You can find me on Instagram at Glenda Hoon-Russell. I look forward to hearing from you.